How Does Florida theorize social change in *Rise of the Creative Class*? What is his thesis?

Some Options:

1. **Creativity Creates Value**
   - “Work Ethic”
   - “Shared Creative Spirit”
     (Idealist Argument)

Therefore, mapping Florida on to Weber can tie in to…
   - Capitalism
   - Creative Economy

Florida claims that this “Creative Economy” is so big that it is almost akin to capitalism as a phenomenon

2. **The Creative Class is the “new” Dominant Class**
   - *Weber*: class is determined by status/honor/prestige as seen through the medium of wealth
   - *Florida*: class is more Marxian, as workers have control over their minds (means of production)
     → This viewpoint can be seen as very Marxist (in above sense), or on the other hand not very Marxist at all (blurred line)

Anti-Marxist Arguments:
   - *Conditional rather than Relational*
   - *May result in exploitation of actual creative class, as no one may take away someone else’s mind – it is their own*

Pro-Marxist Arguments:
   - *Ability of creative class is dependent upon labor of working class to survive (a.k.a. Exploitation may occur more/less, depending)*

How does Florida tie in with Durkheim?
   - He’s on par
     - Theoretically (Functional Argument)
     - Empirically (Exceptions)

What is Florida saying about Social Change?
   - *The rise of this class will bring about change in society because they [society] will have to eventually be accommodated by all, since the creative class is rapidly growing & operates under a different way of thinking/acting than the former status quo*
This change is much more a functional than a causal one (or so Florida says)

“Social Creativity” ----------- “Social Change”
Change being through the mediums of:
  - Family
  - Sex
  - Dress
  - Etc.

HOWEVER, he (Florida) is NOT stating that the change of the family is driving the new Creative Class

- How does Florida try to present his “bare-bones” argument?
  - We think about technology as driving both economic & social change
  - If we think about this as the “force of production,” this makes sense. But it is the social relations of production that drive social & cultural change. (Recall time-travel example from book)

**Did everyone like the book? ** How about when compared with McCall? **
- Florida was far more accessible than McCall, even though maybe a bit far-fetched in terms of his ideas
- Thought he was identifying an “important new step” in human evolution that (one may be tempted to call) utopian
- Isn’t the “rise of the creative class” akin to the Marxian revolution, with some overlapping elements?
- Communism didn’t mesh w/ the messages very much in this book at all
  - Mannheim: Utopian ideas in a technical sense; can only be realized if they require the transcendence of the constraints of the current regime

- How did this book appear from a methodological standpoint?
  - Not very thick methodologically. Empirically arranges cities in terms of tolerance levels, creativity, etc., but this only shows us correlations b/t cities & rank (and not much else)

- So far, from what we’ve read, what does Florida have to say about inequality?
  - Inequality is not good for creative work
    - WHY?
      - People won’t have an environment which is conducive to the sharing of ideas
    - What else?
      - He ignores it [inequality] to a great deal, then tries to stray from ideas from overt (i.e. racial) inequality in lieu of talking about class differences. But he almost ignores it

Notes wage inequality by highlighting higher wage distribution to/for creative class than the working class
Group Work:
- What kinds of challenges are surfacing in your groups?
  *Putting things into sections, condensing*
- What’s a good way to get started on a document?
  - If someone works on a draft
  - People can split work evenly & compile later
  - “The only cure to inertia is energy…” so everyone needs to get moving! Keep being productive with these things for the sake of you AND your group

FOR NEXT TIME:
- Each group MUST email the draft for the methods & sources section **BEFORE CLASS** on Thursday (2/16)
- Materials handed in today will be handed back (w/ Comments) from Dr. Brush next time